

Paul and Bob

"Paul and Bob" was adapted from Charlton, R and Dewdney, M 1995 *The Mediator's Handbook: Skills and strategies for practitioners*. LBC Information Services, Sweet & Maxwell Ltd: London.

The Scenario

Paul and Bob are school friends who left school and set up a juice bar business together. Paul's parents lent him \$30,000 towards the business and he still owes them \$15,000. The business cost \$150,000 to set up. Bob contributed \$10,000 towards the business and he owes his parents \$5,000. Paul and Bob still owe the State Bank \$110,000.

Six months ago Bob became engaged to a university student (Mary) who is studying to be a doctor and will be studying for another 3 years. They plan to marry in three months time and Mary will be financially dependent on Bob.

The juice bar has been really successful. Bob does most of the management and staffing side of things and Paul does the financial side. Bob and Paul worked really well together up until last year when Bob started going out with Mary. Bob started spending a lot less time at the business and Paul found himself having to organise the staff as well as do the financial things.

Paul is fed up and wants to dissolve the partnership and look for new partners in the business. They have decided to try mediation (because they did the SCRAM competition at school) to see if they can find a resolution before things get worse.

Paul's separate facts

Paul feels really annoyed at Bob because he feels that if it wasn't for Paul's arranging the financing etc for the business then there would have been no business and it certainly wouldn't have been the success it is.

Paul feels that Bob has never acknowledged this and he feels that if he were a partner with someone more committed to the business, then it would work better and that they could grow the business nationally.

Bob's separate facts

Bob feels that Paul is jealous of his relationship with Mary and that that is the real reason that he wants to dissolve the partnership. Now that Bob is engaged and will have to support Mary there is no way that he wants to leave the business as it makes enough profit for him and Mary to enjoy a fairly nice lifestyle.

Bob acknowledges that he hasn't been working as hard at the business as he did before but he thinks that the business is fairly stable and he doesn't think it requires him around every day. He also doesn't want to expand the business, as he knows that a lot of businesses go under when they expand before they are ready.